



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
-----------------	-------------	----------------------	---------------------	------------------

10/751,475

01/06/2004

Haruo Inoue

8012-1221

2336

466 7590 11/16/2007
YOUNG & THOMPSON
745 SOUTH 23RD STREET
2ND FLOOR
ARLINGTON, VA 22202

EXAMINER

KIM, ANDREW

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

3714

MAIL DATE

DELIVERY MODE

11/16/2007

PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/751,475

Applicant(s)

INOUE, HARUO

Examiner

Andrew Kim

Art Unit

3714

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 22 August 2007.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-20 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-20 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 06 January 2004 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- 1) ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - 2) ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - 3) ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>1/06/04</u> AK | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Response to Amendment

This office action is in response to the amendment filed on 8/22/07 in which:

- Claims 14-20 have been added.
- Response to claims rejection have been filed.
- Claims 1-20 are pending.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 1-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Inoue (US 5,395,111).

Inoue discloses a slot machine with double reels wherein the outer reel is transparent and composite symbols are formed utilizing both reels.

Claims 1, 11, 14. Inoue discloses a symbol display device, for a game machine, that determines win or loss of a game according to symbol combinations displayed in a display window, said symbol display device comprising:

Art Unit: 3714

plural reel units rotatably aligned in a row behind said display window, each of said plural reel unit being provided with symbols, at least one of said plural reel units being double reels including an inner reel and a transparent outer reel (abstract);

a winning symbol provided on a first reel that is one reel of said inner reel and said outer reel, said winning symbol forms a composite symbol by overlaying said winning symbol on said symbol provided on a second reel that is the other reel of said inner and outer reels (col. 4:55 – 5:44); and

a controller for controlling rotation of said plural reel units, said controller controls said first reel to stop after rotating in a normal and a reverse directions repeatedly within a range that said winning symbol is displayed in said display window before win or loss of said game is determined (col. 4:55 – 5:44).

Claim 2. Inoue discloses wherein said first reel stops the rotation after said second reel stops the rotation (col. 6:1-15).

Claim 3. Inoue discloses wherein said winning symbol is provided in the second reel (col. 4:55 – 5:44).

Claims 4, 15. Inoue discloses wherein said controller controls rotation of the second reel to stop after rotating in said normal and said reverse directions repeatedly within a range that said winning symbol is displayed in the display window (col. 4:55 – 5:44).

Art Unit: 3714

Claims 5, 16. Inoue discloses further comprising: a decoration symbol, said decoration symbol provided in the first reel; wherein said controller rotates the first reel to overlay said decoration symbol on said symbol related to win in the second reel after said win is decided (col. 4:55 – 5:44). The decoration symbol has been interpreted as any symbol that overlays another symbol.

Claims 6, 17. Inoue discloses wherein said decoration symbol is not displayed in said display window while the first reel repeats the rotation in said normal and said reverse directions. This is inherently present because while any reel is in rotation, no specific symbol is displayed to the player.

Claims 7, 18. Inoue discloses further comprising: a shielding symbol provided in said outer reel, said shielding symbol shields a part of a symbol provided in said inner reel (col. 4:55 – 5:44, fig. 6). A shielding symbol has been interpreted as any symbol that overlays another symbol.

Claim 8. Inoue discloses wherein said shielding symbol is not displayed in said display window while the first reel repeats the rotation in said normal and said reverse directions. This is inherently present because while any reel is in rotation, no specific symbol is displayed to the player.

Claims 9, 12, 19. Inoue discloses wherein plural zones are provided in outer periphery

Art Unit: 3714

of said first reel; wherein said controller controls the rotation of said first reel such that only one of said plural zones is displayed through said display window, and changes a zone to be displayed in said display window according to a game stage (col. 4:55 – 5:44, fig. 6). A zone has been interpreted as a symbol and the empty space around the symbol.

Claims 10, 13, 20. Inoue discloses wherein one of said plural zones is a win/loss determining zone consisting essentially of said winning symbol and non-symbol area; wherein said controller rotates said first reel in said normal and said reverse directions in a range that only said win/loss determining zone is displayed in said display window (col. 4:55 – 5:44, fig. 6).

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments filed 8/22/07 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

Regarding claim 1, with respect to the normal and reverse directions repeatedly limitation, the Examiner respectfully asserts that the recited first reel may be either the inner reel or the outer reel. Thus, the first reel, according to INOUE, can move in the normal and reverse directions repeatedly.

Regarding the interpretation of the term shielding, the Examiner respectfully asserts that the term "shields" has been interpreted as any object that is in front of or covers another object.

Regarding the plural zone remark, the Examiner respectfully asserts that the plural zone has been interpreted to include zero to any finite number of symbols or space surrounding thereof.

Conclusion

Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.


Art Unit: 3714

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Andrew Kim whose telephone number is 571-272-1691. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Xuan Thai can be reached on 571-272-7147. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

AK 11/13/2007


XUAN M. THAI
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TC3700